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DISCOURSE

Delivered by request of the members of the

VETERAN CORPS IN THE WAR OF 1812,

IN THE CHURCH CORNER CANAL AND GREENE STREETS,

CITY OF NEW-YORK,

ON THE FOURTH OF JULY, 1851,

BY

REV. P. J. VAN PELT, D. D.

(Late Chaplain of the Third Military District, U. S. Army.)

NEW-YORK:

CASEY C. CHILDS, PRINTER, IN FULTON STREET.

1851.

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Veteran Corps of the War of 1812, '13, and '14.

"HEAD QUARTERS, 51 William Street, }
"New-York, June 21st, 1851. }

"The Corps will assemble on the Morning of the 4th day of July next at 8 o'clock, A. M., precisely at the Superior Court Room, New City Hall, on Chambers Street, (Head Quarters for the day,) to celebrate the Anniversary of our National Independence. All should provide themselves with the Cockade adopted by the Corps, and dress of dark Coats and white Pantaloons, as far as may be convenient.

"Those who wish to parade will be provided with Side Arms on that morning. At 9 o'clock, a Banner, executed by a young lady, will be presented to the Corps for her by his Honor the Mayor, Ambrose C. Kingsland.

"Immediately after the Review, the procession will be formed at the Head Quarters of the day, and proceed to the Church, corner of Canal and Greene Streets, where the Declaration of Independence will be read by Gilbert S. Nexsen, Esq., a member of the Corps, and subsequently, an Oration will be delivered by the Rev. Doct. Peter J. Van Pelt, Chaplain of the Corps.

"The Committee of Arrangement for the Church, are William Raynor, Captain, J. P. Dieterich, and Captain A. W. Jones. The Committee on Refreshments at Head Quarters are Captain A. Dally, Jr., Lieut. H. E. Hoyt, and Lieut. Wm. H. Miller, who will Report particulars to the Commandant, and continue their duties until regularly discharged. The Treasurer will use all diligence in promoting the collection of dues, and on the morning of the 4th be prepared to receive all money that may be offered.

"It is requested by the Commandant that each Officer and Member of this Corps strive to increase the numbers of attendants by giving all publicity to this effort to celebrate the day in a proper and becoming manner, after the lapse of thirty-six years estrangement from each other.

"By order,

"NICHOLAS HAIGHT,

"CAPT. ABR'M DALLY, JR., *Adj't.*"

COLONEL."

Agreeable to the before-written Orders, the Corps assembled and, shortly after nine his Honor the Mayor arrived, accompanied by the Rev. Dr. Spring and the Rev. Dr. Van Pelt, and took their seats on the bench of the Superior Court Room, Dr. Spring on the right, and Dr. Van Pelt on the left of the Mayor. The Veterans were then marched into the room, after which the banner was unfurled, and there was a flourish of trumpets. The ceremony was then commenced with a prayer by Dr. Spring, invoking the Divine blessing ; after which the Mayor rose and spoke as follow :—

GENTLEMEN.—It is with pride, I can assure you, that I am invited to be with you and, most of all, to perform the pleasing duty of presenting to you this banner. It is a tribute most justly due you. Gentlemen, from whatsoever source it might proceed, you will all no doubt agree with me that it is from the highest, noblest, and most pure.—The production of the fair fingers prompted by the warm and patriotic heart of a soldier's daughter. On this banner are the stripes and stars of our national Union ; under its graceful folds, freedom and protection are dispensed to all, unsurpassed by any nation upon earth. This has been achieved and secured by the labors, privation, sacrifices, and deaths of very many of our citizens in the war of 1776 and the war of completion, declared June the 18th, 1812, of which last, yourselves are the honored survivors. I might recite from the pages of history, circumstances and events which are to mine and every American heart, deeply interesting, but it would, I think, be superfluous, as you are well acquainted with them : in many, very many cases, were you participants in the great struggle of 1812, which secured the liberty and happiness we now enjoy, which was commenced and contended for by your honored predecessors in the war of 1776. Under the ensign of the stripes and stars, and with the reveille of the soul-stirring drum and fife, did you and others cheerfully labor to form those entrenchments extending from Gowanus Bay to the Navy Yard, at Brooklyn, and on this island from Hurl Gate, to Manhattanville, and subsequently, under the command of His Excellency our then worthy and honored Governor, Daniel D. Tompkins, were you found, with others from adjoining counties, at your posts as soldiers, in those entrenchments, and elsewhere in and about this harbor, formed an impenetrable wall of defence to this great city, against

(III.)

any force that our powerful enemy could command, which they tacitly acknowledged by changing their scene of operations to the South, where your brethren in arms received them and gave a satisfactory reception, now on file in the archives at Washington, and enrolled on the pages of our National History. Veteran survivors of the war of 1812! it would ill become me to charge you to defend and protect this banner,—our national ensign,—you have already been tried and proved, and not found wanting as defenders of our nation's rights, our nation's honor, and our national independence which we this day celebrate, and of the national flag which this day I have the honor to present as the representative of a young lady unknown only as the daughter of a brother soldier.

His Honor then presented the Colors, and was responded to as follows, by Colonel Haight:—

HONORED SIR:

This flag which you present to the Veteran Corps of the War of 1812, '13 and '14, whom I have the honor to command, is received at your hands as the Chief Magistrate of this great and patriotic city, and the representative of its unknown donor. The encomiums you have been pleased to express are, indeed, extremely flattering and highly complimentary. To us, sir, the expressions of a warm heart, duly appreciating our services as soldiers, is a valuable compensation for our labors, privations and sacrifices in the common cause of our country's defence and honor. Permit me, honorable sir, to thank you, and through you, sir, the young lady who is the donor of this elegant and most valuable tribute, and to communicate to her the unanimous regret of this Corps that her name is unknown to them. Indeed, sir, when I look upon these stripes and upon those stars, surrounding the eagle upon that field of blue, and the scroll held by the eagle's beak with the words "*E Pluribus Unum*," my mind is overwhelmed with reminiscences of the past, and the future lost in the distance of time of what shall be. Those stripes are the original union of thirteen States, each represented by a star, in number thirteen in the War of 1776; subsequently a star has been added for each new State created, peopled, organized and admitted. The War of 1812 was

(IV.)

under the union of stripes and eighteen stars; and now look, at this our national flag, presented on this fourth day of July, 1851. The union of stripes, pure and unstained, with thirty-one stars, and the motto on the scroll—true. Indeed, sir, this appears like the production of a fairy hand. The fancy picture of imagination, wrought and presented to us, telling the past, and pointing to the future. Is it a dream—is it fancy—is it fancy—or is it reality? Sir, it is no dream of fancy. It is true! It is reality!

It is, sir, proverbial of American wives and daughters, that the domestic hearth is the school of thought and exchange of opinion on all matters relating to the ruling topic of the day—civil, religious, philosophical and political; and I think, sir, the fingers that traced those lines with the needle, and directed the painter in his work, have been thoroughly schooled, and her mind well stored with our nation's history. And wherein is our nation's strength which is so truly conveyed? It is in union—one, one indivisible Union.

This Corps received in 1812, the national flag, with thirteen stripes and eighteen stars in union. They stood by it in peril and in need, in war and in peace, until time has numbered thirty-one all in union. We now receive this flag from your honored hands as the representative of its donor, still to be our guide, our polar star through the remainder of life, and pass down to posterity what we have done. To stand firmly, boldly, truly, by word and by deed, to the Union of these States as our common country.

They were then marched down stairs, formed in line in front of the new City Hall, then marched round the old City Hall, into Broadway, thence to the church corner Canal and Greene Streets, when the ceremonies were commenced by the Rev. Dr. Spring, invoking a divine blessing; the Declaration of Independence was then read by Gilbert S. Nexsen, Esq., and a discourse suitable to the occasion was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Peter J. Van Pelt; after which they returned to Head Quarters, New City Hall, and, with their invited guests, partook of a cold collation.

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DISCOURSE.

FELLOW CITIZENS:

We are assembled in accordance with the unanimous resolve of the surviving Veteran Corps (of officers and soldiers) who served in the War of 1812, '13, '14, passed at a Meeting held in Military Hall, in the City of New-York, the 6th June last, 1851.

It having pleased them with like unanimity to select me, in their own words, as "the Orator of the day," I stand before you to address you on this interesting, jubilant, anniversary occasion. I say interesting and jubilant occasion, for so has this Anniversary been regarded and celebrated from the first till this seventy-fifth year. So is it regarded and celebrated by all American patriots and lovers of freedom this day with congratulations of joy and rejoicing. The day, and all who honor it, is the sentiment which is shouted at the festive board, echoed through halls and saloons, and not only pervades the land, but also all places where Americans are found. And so, I apprehend, will it be regarded and celebrated in all coming time, by millions of generations yet unborn.

It is the Anniversary of our nation's birth-day, on which the Delegates of the People in Congress assembled, declared these United States to be free, sovereign and independent. They resolved not to bear the burden of taxation, imposed on them without the right of representation; to throw off the yoke of oppression; to unfurl the flag of thirteen stripes and stars as their national banner of three

millions of people, and assume their equal, independent rank among the powers of the earth.

It was a bold resolve—a hazardous enterprize, a momentous undertaking! because undertaken against an old, warlike, and powerful nation. But the men who undertook and did it—who were selected and delegated in the providence of God—were inspired and gifted with wisdom and courage from above, and possessed the necessary qualifications of integrity and patriotism. They appealed to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe for the rectitude of their intentions and the justice of their cause; and for the support of it, mutually pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor; having the testimony of approving consciences, endowed with patriotism, talent, integrity, firmness and fortitude, and having the encouraging hope of divine approbation. They also had the confidence of their constituency—a patriotic, virtuous and enlightened people; and under the smiles and the determinate counsel of heaven, the glorious work, after seven years of anxious toil and conflict, was accomplished. Their memories, virtues, and extraordinary achievements are, as doubtless they ought and will be, held in lasting and grateful remembrance.

The distinguished blessings of freedom, civil and religious, they projected and labored for with unremitted diligence, zeal and courage, we, with tens of thousands from divers lands are enjoying, while there is none to make us afraid.

They were a pure and rare race of men, who had grown up in this new world, descended from chivalrous, pious ancestry in the old world, who had encountered fierce opposition in high places, and endured contradiction, priva-

tion, persecution and suffering as well from the court of high commission and Star Chamber in England, as from the revocation of the edict of Nants, and intolerant papal bigotry in France; and therefore knew how to prize the boon of liberty.

Brought up and instructed in the cardinal principles of the bible, and in knowledge of the liberty wherewith Christ, the Saviour, makes his people free, they hated persecution and oppression, and loved truth, justice, mercy, and the rights of man.

To glance at and recount briefly their achievements, as also of those who succeeded them and were engaged in the second War of 1812, and show how we may best promote and perpetuate the rich inheritance of liberty transmitted us with the precious privileges we enjoy, are the points to which I invite your attention.

The drama of the revolution, the first war for independence, being fully opened, to effect it without difficulty, commotion, loss of life, blood and treasure, was not, could not be expected.

Not only many valuable lives were immolated in freedom's cause, but the temples of Jehovah's worship were attacked, profaned, and demolished. Defenceless towns and villages were set on fire and reduced to ashes; cultured fields were desolated; widows' houses plundered; the virtuous daughter ignominiously robbed of her chastity; the father bewailed his child; the mother the loss of her son—her darling son—whose youthful bosom glowed with the love of liberty—who embarked in the contest for freedom, and who died fighting for his country. Many a fair and beauteous form was left on the cold ground, the miserable appendage of a mangled corpse. The blood of the brave

and honorable stained the soil and crimsoned the brooks of America, before she could be free and independent, and elevated to that high rank to which she was destined by the Supreme Arbiter of the fate of Nations.

Alas! how fearful in prospective, the wide waste of horror and devastation that lay before our fathers! How portentous that period when the congregated storms of proud monarchy and aristocratic rage broke loose upon us—when the onset for independence was made. It was then the time that tried men's souls; when the tramp of war resounded throughout our broad land, and summoned to our shores the legions of arbitrary power; that an army of American soldiers—true, patriotic Whigs, fearless of danger and jeopardizing life! pressed around the elevated standards of freedom and their country; contending not for ambition, nor vain honor and conquest, but for independence and their country's rights. They endured privations, sufferings and hardships, offering their lives, their fortunes and honor in sacred pledges of faithfulness to their cause. They risked their all—confiscation of property, loss of life and reputation, their altars and peaceful firesides, in the struggle for liberty. A struggle with an ancient, warlike, brave and powerful nation. But *He* who was with us, who ruleth in the armies of heaven, was more and mightier than they who were against us.

Holding as we do all nations enemies in war, in peace friends; it is only with a view to refresh your memories, and keep alive the spirit of the day, that we rehearse the story and remark: Lexington opened the tragic scene, and furnished the first public proofs of republican resolution and valor. In looking back on the time, we see the raw and undisciplined troops, organized and led on by brave

chiefs, rush to the battle field, and as if by the power of inspiration, perform prodigies of valor.

Bunker Hill records the heroism of yeomanry and martial prowess of a Warren. Alas! there that brave officer fell deeply lamented. Boston cradled the revolution, and produced eminent champions in the cause. "Sink or swim," said the elder Adams, "I go for independence." The name of John Hancock stand pre-eminent on the roll of our early and pure patriots.

In those days of pure and lofty patriotism, the South, emulating the north, breathing a like spirit of gallantry and of union; we hear the eloquent Patrick Henry exclaiming in the deliberative Assembly, "Give me liberty or give me death."

That illustrious citizen George Washington of Virginia, having been appointed by Congress commander-in-chief of our armies, we behold him at Cambridge, Massachusetts, and then in New-York, crossing the East River, battling with the foe on Long Island, (and as was said, against his own private and better judgement.) It was there he was heard to utter these memorable words to his officers, (having been told that the enemy had landed,) "If the enemy advance and attack us to-night we are unprepared. But we must trust in God, hope for the best, and do our duty."

We notice him recrossing the East River in the dead of night to this city, with the manifest interposition of heaven. Not a breath of air rippled the water to disturb the boats deeply laden with officers and soldiers, and a dense fog settled down between the two armies, (like to the cloud that intervened between the armies of Pharoah and Moses at the Red Sea,) which spread over the enemy's shipping in New-York Bay, and prevented their coming up to the

city. Thus was Washington and his army marvelously delivered in the memorable summer of 1776.

Pursued by the enemy, he skirmished, fought and retreated till he came to White Plains, in Westchester; where he encamped, stood, and had a drawn battle. From thence he crossed the North River, and proceeded through New Jersey to Trenton, where having crossed the Delaware amidst the roaring ice, he attacked and captured the mercenary body of Hessians, and kindling large fires in his encampment to delude the enemy, he marched to Princeton, where he again grappled with the foe effectively, and thence went into winter quarters at Morristown.

It was in the conflict at Princeton, that the gallant Gen. Mercer fell, whose memory is engraven in New Jersey. There flowed the purple stream of his life for freedom. We notice also our Washington with the gallant La Fayette at Monmouth, where, as Gen. La Fayette remarked when last here, our troops behaved gallantly under the command of his Excellency Gen. Washington, when he had disarmed and put Gen. Lee under arrest for mal-conduct. So also we might notice the triumphs of a Schuyler and Gates, and others at Saratoga, in the surrender of Burgoyne. The able Generalship of Green, at Guilford and the Eutaw Springs. As also the heroic deeds of the chivalrous Gen. Marion of South Carolina, and of others whose names adorn the pages of our revolutionary annals. But time would fail, to recite all the places and deeds of those distinguished patriots of the revolution, and the army of suffering brave soldiers who achieved our Independence. We must not however omit to notice the celebrated Yorktown in Virginia. Long shall the fame of that siege—the last momentous conflict, be remembered with profound gratitude to the mighty

power that overrules and directs the fate of battles, and destiny of nations. There did the guardian angel protect our beloved Washington by hair breadth escape, and there did he shine as a star of the first magnitude, amid the shouts of victory, and the splendour of a proud triumph. It seems as if divine Providence had reserved this place in the native States of the American Commander, for the last brilliant display of great and glorious actions. With the surrender of lord Cornwallis and his army, in the progress of events, was ended the war of the revolution, and the acknowledgment of our independence by the British Government.

Washington acknowledged the good hand of God on our counsels and arms, succored by the co-operation of the gallant La Fayette and his brave countrymen, a generous ally. Congress, the army and the nation; gave thanks to Almighty God for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men.

There were many circumstances of divine concurrence and signal interposition during the arduous struggle for independence, which displayed the arm of omnipotence, and evinced the justice of the cause.

An incident of no small moment and worthy of mention, occurred on this Island, (as is related,) at the house of Mr. Robert Murray, (known as Murray Hill,) near which an encounter took place between the troops of Washington and the advancing enemy in command of Generals Howe and Clinton; at the close of which Washington sent an officer to Mrs. wife of Robert Murray, with a request to her, to detain, if possible, Generals Howe and Clinton with their army at her house, until Gen. Putnam with a large body of Washington's army, who were on the north side of the

City and Island, had passed by the Bloomingdale road ; which the true and patriotic Mrs. R. Murray accomplished. By going down the lawn to the gate leading to the house, by the road side where the Generals, Howe and Clinton with the British army just at the time came on the advancing march. She invited them to her house to take some refreshment, as it was a hot day, and as they had been engaged in hot work, (a battle.) Gen. Howe said to Gen. Clinton ; "Clinton, shall we accept the lady's invitation ?" to which Clinton answered in the affirmative ; the army was ordered to halt. It was during that halt, when the chief officers of the British army were taking refreshments at Mrs. Murray's, that Gen. Putnam passed by the Bloomingdale road, joined Washington, and made a narrow and providential escape. But for the forethought of Washington, the hospitality and fidelity of Mrs. Murray, it was thought the brave Gen. Putnam with his division would have been surrounded and cut off, and Washington's army would have been greatly weakened, if not destroyed. What effect, such loss at this interesting period of the war would have had, is not for us to say. Thus was Washington and his army, by his inventive genius, the hospitable disposition, and true patriotism of a New York and an American Lady, delivered at that time from the grasp of the enemy—in a providential, signal manner.

Thus is it that the most high who ruleth over men, makes the wrath of man to praise him, and restrains the remainder of their wrath.

The fact of having a man in our country at that juncture as was George Washington ; who in the purity of his character, his industrious habits—his sound, discriminating judgment—his honesty and fixedness of purpose—his enlight-

ened understanding—his reverence for God, his word and truth, and therefore blessed in his counsels and arms—his prudent caution, military tact and prowess, as was early evinced at the defeat of Braddock; where his life was most signally preserved! together with his undeviating patriotism—love of liberty and the rights of the people! possessing such qualifications, he was eminently fitted for a leader and commander of the American army. And under divine auspices he did lead the army to victory, and brought the country in union and renown far and wide—to the establishment of peace, liberty and independence.

The tears and mourning of the nation, when he was removed by death, (on which occasion he who now addresses you delivered an oration by request, on the day set apart by Congress to observe his obsequies, and commemorate his virtues) best demonstrated the universal sympathy and love for his rare and exalted character. And even now on this national anniversary, with a vastly increased and still increasing population, methinks I see more than 22 millions of freemen, doing the homage of respect, gratitude and affection to his memory, thanking God for so distinguished a gift, and with one accord pronouncing him father of his country—"first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

He might when he felt power have forgot right, and seizing the critical moment when the army was disbanded, and taking advantage of the anonymous seditious letters which were then published and scattered through the army, have sought to make himself a military despot. We have an instructive example of such dereliction of principle in Napoleon Bonaparte, the first of the Gaelic Cæsars, who sat on the throne of the Bourbons, who sub-

jugated almost all the eastern continent, and seemed to set out in his career, with love of liberty and republican principles. But Washington, honest and honorable in his principles and engagements; proved true and faithful to the interests and rights of the people. In taking leave of the army, he said: "Brave soldiers! having fought for liberty and attained by the blessing of Providence, the object; let us go to our homes—and work for property."

The people of the United States having by their delegates in convention made, ratified and confirmed a general and federal constitution, in order to "establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, and form a more perfect union between the States; to promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to themselves and their posterity:" organized the Government, and elected George Washington the first President.

The Government being thus organized, and going on in successful operation; the country prosperous in its various departments of agriculture, commerce, manufactures, arts and sciences: it was soon discovered, that crowned heads in Europe with their minions of royalty, envied our peaceable and flourishing condition; became jealous of our unexampled growth and prosperity, and manifested a disposition of unfriendliness toward us. Arising as well from our free institutions, republican principles, and structure of our Government, placing the power in the hands of the people, by the right of suffrage through the ballot box, and leaving each one free to worship God according to the dictates of conscience; without connection with, or exclusive patronage from the civil Government; as also from our prosperity, peace and happiness. And moreover regarding our Government as imbecile and indigent; our

Union, a rope of sand, our people inefficient, who could not be goaded into war.

Hence, already in the administration of President Washington, serious collisions and disagreements began to take place, which were coeval with the treaty that terminated the first American war. Which were afterwards partially adjusted by Mr. Jay's treaty.

In the administration of President Adams, another collision and disagreement took place with Spain, which was however soon amicably settled. And another with France, which had begun under the former administration, and which was of a more grave and aggravated character. This was also afterwards in a manner palliated.

In the administration of Presidents Jefferson and Madison, the disrespectful and hostile spirit of the British pursued us not only at sea, the highway of nations, but penetrated the mouth of our harbour.

The great matter at issue between the two countries, besides other differences, was the interruption of our ships and vessels at sea, and the impressment of seamen from on board of them. Seizing and searching our ships at sea by the British for persons and property; we being a neutral nation. Our Government claiming by the law of nations, that our flag should protect our ships, citizens—crews and property under it. That it should be a guaranty and passport to our respect, honor and safety in all places on the high seas.

It was this that brought on the second war of independence, so called, in 1812. The justice and necessity of which was eloquently advocated in Congress by that eminent Statesman and Senator, Henry Clay, "Who spoke to the heart, and bore the palm away;" who was after-

wards one of the Commissioners appointed; that made the treaty of peace between the two nations at Ghent.

In this conflict which was near three years, battles at sea and on land were fought—and were won and lost, as is the fate and fortune of war. In this war, you the survivors of the Veteran Corps bore a manly and distinguished part, and were engaged in defending and maintaining the honor and rights of your independent Government; of your flag and your Country.

In doing this, many privations, losses, and hardships were endured, many obstacles encountered, much treasure expended, and many lives lost. It was feared by some when the war commenced, that in contending with so powerful a nation for our just and equal rights in navigating the ocean—a nation which assumed to be mistress of the seas!—our small navy would be swept from it, or covered with disgrace.

But he who ruleth among the nations, whose is the sea; who made it for the good of all—an element for ships to move in, and appointed its bounds—favored us also there on the mighty deep, as it pleased him to do for us on the land; crowned our infant or youthful navy, as well on the wide ocean, as on the inland seas of the lakes, with great and signal and glorious victories—testifying to the able seamanship, the nautical skill and bravery of officers and men, and bearing the pledges of defence, prosperity and protection—to the justice of our cause on the ocean, to free trade and sailors' rights.

It was in those naval engagements that the genius and courage of the distinguished heroes, Hull, Bainbridge, Lawrence, Perry, Macdonough and Decatur, were developed, and eulogized by the nation. So also in that war

were developed the elevated patriotism and prowess, the intellectual and military resources of intrepid officers and soldiers on land, who by their valorous deeds became renowned! were honored and esteemed by a grateful people with bursts of applause. Such as Brown at Sackett's Harbor, McComb at Plattsburg, and Scott the hero of Chippewa and Lundy's Lane. And last and greatest of all, to cap the climax, and end the strife of an unnatural war! the masterly and brilliantly crowning battle of New Orleans under Gen. Jackson, where a righteous Providence seemed to say to the invading enemy, "Such of you as are left alive on the field of battle, haste to your ships of war and go home to your own rich and cultivated lands in good old England, and let your brethren and kindred in America alone, and molest them not!" And to us, in the same eventful battle, a kind Providence seemed to pronounce our cause just, in defending the country against valiant and powerful invaders, maintaining our honor and dignity among the nations, vindicating our rights on sea and land, and preserving our union and independence unimpaired.

I have said *that war* was unnatural: and is it not unnatural for nations as Great Britain and the United States of America, speaking the same rich and beautiful language, from whose chivalric ancestry we have descended, and taught by their noble example, as furnished in their instructive history, to resist aggression, and defend our country, her liberties and rights; each boasting of its excellent institutions and liberty; each brave and honorable, professing the same religion, pure and unadulterated, and each co-operating in Christian union to exhibit Christianity in its most excellent character, and by all laudable efforts

to evangelize the heathen nations ; to circulate the Bible—the holy book of God—without note or comment, through foreign, heathen lands, and spread the knowledge of salvation by Jesus Christ the Son of God, the only true Saviour, broad cast all over the world.

Surely it is specially unnatural and wrong, for such enlightened and Christian nations to be at war with each other. And whence come wars and fightings? Come they not hence as an apostle says, “even of lusts that war in the members.”

May wisdom, courage and power be so tempered, justice and mercy so disposed, good faith and charity be so exercised, that there shall be no more war between these nations.

With the last marvellous, successful struggle at New Orleans, the second war of independence was ended. The law of nations was vindicated and maintained. Our institutions preserved in their purity and vigor. Our flag untarnished, floating in the breeze of seas and rivers among distant nations. Our commerce, agriculture, arts and sciences flourishing. Our country's right and liberties undiminished and inviolate. The tide of emigration flowing toward us with accumulated strength, giving us numerical force. Our national union and honor cemented, consolidated and advanced. The importance and dignity of the Government increased in estimation and renown in all parts of the world.

In the words of the gallant La Fayette, who said to me, “wherever the name of an American, especially the presence of an American officer is announced in Europe ; he is received with marked respect.” “That war,” he added, “let the world see that what the fathers contended for in the *first* war ; the sons were able and willing to defend and

maintain in the *second*." And truly the spirit evinced by the fathers, survived in the sons.

O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works, for his guidance and direction and great care of us as a nation; for the victories achieved, for the peace and prosperity we enjoy. In that war, our number of States were "seventeen, and the number of vessels captured was more than sixteen hundred, with more than three thousand guns, and twelve thousand men."

Since then, besides Indian wars of minor importance, we have had a war with the Mexicans.

This, as was said, originated in their refusing or withholding and delaying the payment of moneys long and justly due us; together with a manifestation of trifling and menace toward us of dishonor and disrespect, derogatory to the honor and dignity of our Government.

In this late war whilst we deplore again the privations and sufferings endured, the treasure expended, the profuse effusion of human blood—the loss of dear and valuable lives; and sympathise with the widows and fatherless! our arms were again signally blessed and favored by divine interposition. With vastly inferior numbers, as at Palo Alta, Resaca de la Palma, at Monterey and Buena Vista, under Gen. Taylor with his small number of invincible volunteer soldiers. So also at the strong castle of St. Juan de Ulloa, in Vera Cruz; supposed to be impregnable. As also at Chapultepec, Molina Del Rey and the City of Mexico, under Gen. Scott.

In which memorable battles and celebrated victories obtained with triumphs and conquests by inferior numbers, rarely equalled by military skill, science and bravery, the New York volunteers bore a distinguished part, and gained

signal honor and applause; not only for themselves, but also for the Empire State, and the whole country. Showing to the world, that with such volunteer citizen-soldiers as we have by hundreds of thousands in our various industrial employment, intelligent, active, hardy, patriotic and brave! under the blessing of the Almighty ruler of nations, our independence and liberties will be defended, and triumphantly maintained.

That in the hands of such patriots and men, led by officers capable, faithful and true, with the fostering care and propitious smiles of heaven! the honor of the country, the constitution, the union—and the republic are safe.

Having come out of the war with Mexico with our flag unsullied, and with a vast additional territory, abounding with gold and precious metals contributing to the wealth of the country; which now stretches far along the Pacific Ocean on the west, and running far into the interior; with the settlement of the dues, and annexation already of a State, making our number thirty-one, and territory sufficient soon to make several more States; together with the development of mountains of gold, and vast physical resources of wealth; from minerals, agriculture, trade, commerce, manufactures, arts and literature; our free institutions, civil and religious extensively diffused, the cause of temperance, education and good morals promoted, the boundaries of the republic enlarged—our rights and liberties preserved in tranquil and happy enjoyment, with the shield of the Gospel of grace for our sure protection! Surely we may say, what has God wrought for us! What more could have been done, that has not been done! Surely the Almighty has not dealt *so* with any nation.

Possessing such a country as this; abounding with all

the necessities, and most of the luxuries of the world, where we eat our bread without scarceness, and drink our water from the pure fountains, and blessed with a constitution of Government, the result of a spirit of amity of our fathers; of mutual deference and compromise between the United States, so as to promote the general welfare, and secure the freedom and happiness of all! A constitution which guaranties the right of suffrage, the rights of civil and religious liberty to each and to all the people! It remains to show how, and in what manner; by what rule of conduct we shall best preserve this country dear to us all!—with its constitution, union, liberty and independence, and transmit it inviolate to succeeding generations.

On this point, as on most subjects, there may be an honest difference of opinion.

It seems however clear and reasonable, that the spirit and way, in which our independence was achieved, the constitution of our country was made, the Government organized and put into operation; is the spirit to be cherished and way to be exercised, in order to preserve and perpetuate it. Now this was done according to the declaration of the upright and renowned sages of our country, who framed the constitution; in the spirit of amity, and the way of deference and concession to each State, entering into the compact. Otherwise they could not have done it. So that the union of all the States, in the confederacy, with their different interests; south and north being consulted, consolidated—formed into one compact; all might share in the common benefits of defence, prosperity, honor, harmony and happiness. Such a union they considered so important as to involve “the prosperity, felicity, safety, perhaps our

national existence." Therefore, in our legislation to have due respect to the rights and interests of each and all! how, and at all times, to cherish a like spirit of friendship and good feeling by all our citizens towards each State in the Union: is doubtless the most likely and best way to preserve our national existence, promote our prosperity, safety, honor and happiness, and transmit these inestimable blessings to posterity. It was in the spirit of friendship, love and good will to man, by the great Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier of the world, that the Gospel was ordained to be preached, the way of salvation made known by the cross of Christ, the true, holy Catholic Church instituted, the people exhorted to repent and believe, to love God and each other; to do to others, as they would have others do to them; and as an incentive to duty; peace on earth with gracious consolation—and the glorious inheritance reserved in heaven, was the reward—promised.

In such a spirit of amity did our virtuous and honored fathers achieve our independence, frame the constitution, model and establish our excellent Government.

They had imbibed the firm and generous, and kindly affectioned spirit of the Gospel, and they acted it out, as is manifested in the first prayer in Congress. As also by Washington on the eve of one of the first eventful battles for freedom; when he said, "*Let us trust in God, hope for the best, and do our duty.*"

And again, as he said in his farewell address to the people of the United States. Enjoining it on all to adhere to the union, and support the constitution as the palladium of our liberties, our peace at home, our safety and respect abroad. To frown indignantly on the first dawning of every attempt to sever the union of the States, or to alien-

ate one portion of our country from the rest. To cultivate good morals and respectful behaviour towards each other.

Such a spirit of friendship or amity evinced to one another, in connection with the paramount desire to advance the cause and kingdom of the divine Redeemer in the hearts and lives of men, with a view to their temporal and everlasting happiness; such a rule of conduct and virtuous course of life, in the spirit of fraternal feeling, and exercise of christian charity; will be found to be the most sure and effectual way to perpetuate our glorious Union, preserve our admirable constitution, with the guarantees of national and State rights, of civil and religious freedom; as also to secure the continued enjoyment of the blessings of divine Providence. In this way we will maintain our character as a nation—we will suppress unhallowed passions—rivalships and jealousies; and show that we are capable of self-government, and of justly discriminating between greater and lesser evils! and spread the fame and glory of the republic.

A republic, the purest, greatest and best ever formed by men, which in its fundamental principles and structure is similar to the Government, formed in divine wisdom and goodness among the first chosen people of the most high on earth, and bears a most striking resemblance, to the ancient and pure commonwealth of Israel. In which the people have the power, and choose their representatives and officers; where liberty is founded in justice, reason, intelligence and law. Where the press is free, knowledge diffused among the people, crime is punished, and virtue rewarded; where every man is protected in his just rights, and left free by his reason to combat error in principle and practice, in politics and religion, and worship God according to the dictates of his conscience.

What a sublime and interesting spectacle does our country present in the world. Moving onward—onward, in freedom, in union, in wealth, resources, literature, science, arts, numbers, distinction, and unexampled prosperity and happiness.

We may on this returning Anniversary, commemorative of our Independence, having as we joyously hope and believe, passed a crisis! be indulged, exultingly to exclaim, "Excelsior!" and adopting the sentiment, with a little variation in words, of a distinguished divine,* who was both poet and patriot of the revolution, say:

"United, United States, to higher glory arise;
The Queen of the World, and the child of the skies;
Thy genius commands thee, with rapture behold,
While ages on ages, thy splendor unfold:
Thy reign is the last and the noblest of time,
Most fruitful thy soil, most inviting thy clime;
May the crimes of the East ne'er crimson thy name,
Be freedom and science, and virtue thy fame."

Here in this country—man, whether native or adopted; free born or naturalized; breathes free air. And though poor, if he has respect for himself, his freedom and our institutions; if he is honest and honorable, industrious, moral, just and virtuous in his conduct—is Nature's nobleman. He will get employment, and be respected by others; and in common with his fellow-citizens, will be protected by the laws in his rights; beneath the broad expanse of the Tree of Liberty, which is spread over thirty-one States; reaching far along the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans; besides a vast territory, growing, and soon to be added to the glorious Union, in accordance with the Constitution.

* Rev. Dr. Dwight, President of New Haven College.

Having had the honor and pleasure in my early boyhood and school-going days, to spend part of an afternoon in the company of Gen. Washington, on Long Island, previous to his inauguration in the City of New-York as the first President of our Republic! I remember well his grave, majestic countenance—his dignified deportment—his bland and amiable manners—his stately stepping and lofty bearing in walking—arrayed in his military uniform of buff and blue—and towering above the officers then with him; as also his elegant appearance when mounted on horseback, being in person, as was said, over six feet high.

Subsequently, and during my Collegiate years in Columbia College, N. Y., Gov. Alexander Hamilton made the remark: "That often as he was with his Excellency, Gen. Washington, he invariably felt a degree of awe in his presence; and that this feeling, which was general, was inspired because of a deep sense entertained of Washington's greatness, justness and goodness."

Of the same import, was the remark of Gen. La Fayette, to me, on his last visit to our country as the nation's guest, at the house of Gov. Tompkins on Staten Island; when by request of the Governor, the honor was conferred on me of delivering the salutatory address to Gen. La Fayette; with cordial welcome, and congratulations on his safe arrival once more in the country; for whose civil and religious liberties he fought gallantly in the days of his youth, by the side of our illustrious Washington. On which interesting and memorable occasion, Gen. La Fayette also made the following, further remark:

"That at the close of the revolutionary war, on a visit to Mount Vernon, the seat of his Excellency Gen. Washington, when he saw Mrs. Washington—the mother of the

General ; who was at the time when he got there, in the garden, having on her head a large bonnet or hat, superintending her culinary plants and vegetables, was received most cordially and affectionately without undue ceremony, and then entertained by her in the house with instructive conversation : his wonder ceased, that Washington, the son of such a mother, should be so great a patriot—so pure and great and good a man.”

And added, “if such be the matrons of America ; no wonder that their sons should be such lovers of liberty, such distinguished patriots, such illustrious citizens.”

Having mentioned these reminiscences to the late Gen. Taylor at Washington, at the time of his inauguration as President of the United States ; and wishing him the blessing of the Almighty on his Presidential career ! he replied and said. “My dear Sir, I thank you for your good wishes to me, and our beloved country. I shall administer the Government to the best of my ability, after the manner of our illustrious Washington ; irrespective of party—for the good of the country. And do the best I can for the good of all the people.”

Now when we contemplate our country, these United States of America, honored and blessed with so many pure patriots and eminent citizens—with Washington as chief. A country which illustrious fathers declared of right were and ought to be free and independent ; the anniversary of which we with millions are celebrating this day.

A country inhabited by people of various ancestry, and united by States of great extent, embracing various soils and climes, each and all sovereign, with written constitutions ; under one general and federal written constitution ; protecting the rights and sovereignty of each State, and gua-

ranteeing the right, the safety and happiness of all ; united in bonds of fraternal friendship and love !

Such a country, with such a Government and such a republic ! far surpassing ancient Grecian and Roman republics, as well in the guarantees of liberty and excellence of its institutions, as in wisdom and perfection of organization ! which has endured three quarters of a century, has passed successfully severe ordeals that have tested its strength, and nobly triumphed over the shocks of war ! leaving its citizens in honor, peace and prosperity ! Shall such a republican Government, the best and noblest of time ! formed by the wisdom, the patriotism and virtue of illustrious fathers ; be rent asunder, have its unity broken, its beauty marred and destroyed ! God forbid it.

If such should be the catastrophe, the fatal event and final destiny of these United States, of free and independent America ! then may honest patriots, true Americans and Christians weep indeed. Then would the lovers of liberty, and the rights of man throughout Europe and the world weep.

Then, methinks, if the sad tidings were borne by angels, the ministering spirits of the most high ; to Washington *and* the patriot sages and heroes of the revolution ! great would be the wail of sorrow, for the severance and downfall of the American Republic.

But whilst the "earth bears a plant, and the sea rolls a wave ;" we hope in the mercy and power of God, the intelligence, patriotism and virtue of the American people ; that such a deplorable event shall not happen. But that the Union of the States shall be better and better cemented, union and harmony prevail and be perpetuated. The constitution, the monument of the united wisdom, and admira-

tion of the world stand and remain like a rock in the ocean; unhurt amid the dashing waves of disaffection and disunion. "So mote it be," brother Americans.

If then, as enlightened, free and faithful Americans; you are resolved to support a good Government—a Government of the people—founded in republican principles; distinct from and opposed to royalty and titled nobility in Church and State; won by the valor, through divine favor, and endeared by the blood of many precious lives. If you are determined that the Union, formed by our fathers—must and shall be preserved! That the Constitution which guarantees your rights and privileges—shall stand an enduring monument of American wisdom, patriotism, union and virtue! And, if it pleases the Almighty, that it shall not be brokeu—nor surrendered to tyrants, nor insidious political demagogues!

If as true Americans, who have fought in defence of liberty, your country and its rights, as your fathers did before you, and are left in the full enjoyment of invaluable privileges! let me implore you to be thankful to God, and rightly to appreciate your blessings, by living honorably, virtuously, and usefully in the world. Above all to love God, who loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. Having so loved us, we ought to love one another.

May the Spirit of Grace influence the hearts of the people, and excite them to greater friendship, love and gratitude! to the honor of themselves—their country, and the preservation of their rights and liberties.

And as a further means, to preserve the Union, and your dear bought privileges; and transmit them to future generations! Be advised frequently to think and talk of—to

cherish and support the sentiment of our beloved and immortal Washington, as expressed in his farewell address to the people of his country. He loved the Constitution, the Union, and liberties of the country, whose army he led to victory—whose Government he administered with success; for which he periled his life, and devoted his time and talents. Discountenance all vexatious, improper agitation of every matter, whether slavery, fugitive law, or whatever else; conflicting with the Constitution—arraying citizen against citizen—and disturbing the peace and union of the United States. The saying is no less true than old, that “United we stand, divided we fall.” And that there have been designs to divide, in order to conquer us, cannot be doubted. Whether you are inhabitants of the North, South, East or West of this great and extensive republic; support the powers that are constituted, and obey the laws enacted by the legitimate authority and voice of a free people.

The banner that displays the eagle, the stripes and stars of our beloved country—free and united America; is the same throughout the Union. On this flag is inscribed the significant motto, “E Pluribus Unum.” It is the star-spangled standard of the States, known and honored by the nations as the ensign of the model republic—the flag of American freedom. United, under it—with the blessings of the God of our fathers, we shall rise higher and higher in national importance; be protected in our rights and hold our liberties safe and secure. Our country respected abroad, prosperous and happy at home, with Union for her pole star—shall guide to the ultimate triumph of liberty over the world; and advancing in splendour, fame and glory; like the sun in the firmament, shine brighter and brighter to the perfect day.